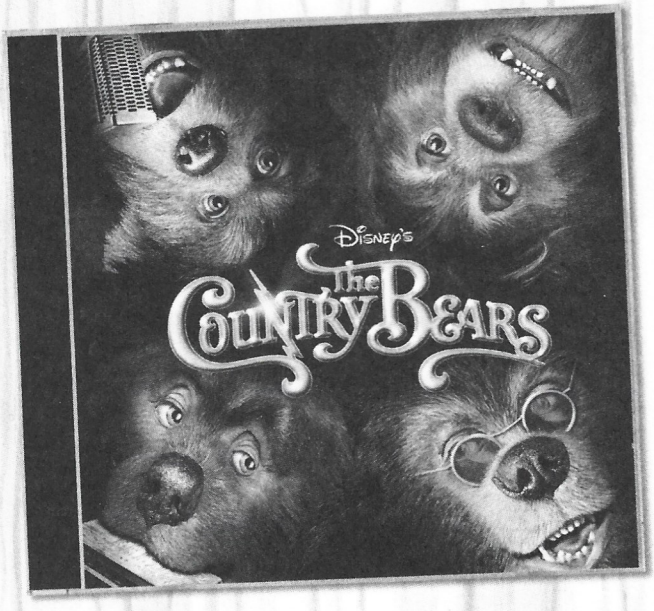
the official fan book

PACKED WITH PHOTOS AND FACTS ABOUT THE LEGENDARY ROCK BAND

THE BEARS ARE BACK IN TOWN!

ROCK AND ROLL WITH THE LEGENDARY COUNTRY BEARS



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BY IRENE TRIMBLE

The Country Bears

Based on Walt Disney's
"Country Bear Jamboree"

Written by
Mark Perez

Produced by
Andrew Gunn and Jeffrey Chernov

Directed by
Peter Hastings

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THE BEARS ARE BACK IN TOWN!

The members of the legendary Country Bears, torn apart by the perils of their success—jealousy, fame, and especially the honey—are licking off their paws and picking up their instruments.

It's been ten years since Zeb Zoober, Tennessee O'Neal, and Fred and Ted Bedderhead called it quits. But when historic Country Bear Hall was doomed to be demolished, the Bears' old manager and their biggest fan teamed up to bring the band back together for a benefit concert. The concert saved the hall—and their furry friendships.

The Country Bears are now back on top: sold-out arenas, crowds mobbing them wherever they go, thousands of fan letters pouring in from all over the world. But this time, they're not going to let success come between them. These talented bears can handle it.

Now, for the first time, The Country Bears tell all. You'll hear about their music, their fans, and the long road back to the stage. You'll learn how four carnivores developed a classic American rock 'n' roll sound so awesome it still rocks the music world today.

Turn the page and meet the Bears.

zeb zoober

Instrument: Fiddle

Place of birth: Yosemite National Park

Height: 6 feet 4 inches

Weight: 365 pounds

Fur: Auburn

Favorite food: Salmon salsa

Favorite movie: *Star Wars*

Favorite actor: The wookie

Favorite song: "Hip to Be Bear"

Zeb Zoober always wanted to perform. As a young cub he was inspired by crossover acts such as Buddy Holly and the Crickets and Alvin and the Chipmunks. "If those animals could do it, why not me?" Zeb often said to whoever would listen.

His first taste of stardom came as a ten-year-old extra on an episode of *Wild Safari*. "A guy in a khaki shirt came up behind me with a tranquilizer dart," says Zeb, rubbing his leg. The experience hinted at things to come. Zeb would once again experience fame while getting stung hard . . . this time by

his craving for the sweeter things in life. "I just couldn't leave the honey alone," Zeb confesses. "The long hours and the pressures of the road really got to me."

Thanks to Beary Barrington, the Bears' number one fan, Zeb learned he didn't need honey to make it as a rock star. "He made me believe in myself," Zeb says. "Now I'm digging the fame, the music, the whole crazy scene."

Zeb claims if he hadn't become a Country Bear, he would have liked to follow in the pawsteps of his idol, Smokey. "The Bear, that is," explains Zeb. "But I really dig those Motown guys, too."

Beary Barrington got Zeb off honey and back onstage. This is one cool cub!

tennessee o'neal

Instrument: One-string thang

Place of birth: Blue Ridge Mountains, Tennessee

Height: 5 feet 8 inches

Weight: 350 pounds

Fur: Light to medium brown

Favorite hairstyle: Center part with highlighted bangs

Favorite food: Fish and chips

Favorite band: Phish (without the chips)

Favorite sport: Jujitsu

Ever since he was a cub, heartthrob Tennessee O'Neal has been fascinated by strings. "I spent a lot of time working with shoelaces and yo-yos as a kid," says Tennessee. "You know, trying to get a certain sound. I'd stretch 'em, soak 'em in water, chew on 'em awhile. It took me a long time to finally develop a one-string thang that had the sound I was lookin' fer."

And it was a sound that influenced the greats. But even Hendrix, Clapton, and Jeff Beck couldn't play the one-string thang like Tennessee. "That's 'cause he plays it from the heart," explains bandmate Zeb Zoober.

Tennessee has a heart of gold and a belly of fish.

Tennessee's tenderheartedness was always evident in his music. One of his first songs, "Don't It Make My Brown Fur Blue," lovingly detailed his feelings for backup singer Trixie St. Claire.

"I'm a bear who wears his heart on his sleeve," Tennessee says with a smile. Unfortunately, that's not his only wardrobe problem!

ted bedderhead

Instruments: Lead guitar and banjo

Place of birth: Memphis, just outside Graceland

Height: 5 feet 10 inches

Weight: 300 pounds

Vision: 20/20, but wears glasses " 'cause the ladies like 'em."

Fur: Dark brown, with a light brown snout

Favorite band: The Beastie Boys

Favorite TV show: *The Monkees*

Ted Bedderhead has always wanted to be the big bear both onstage and behind the scenes. "Even when I was young I was puttin' on shows. I'd make Fred dress up in costumes and we'd sing and dance for Mom and Pop right there in the den," remembers Ted. "Other cubs wanted to grow up and be astronauts or shoe salesmen. Not me."

When he was six years old, Ted got a guitar for Christmas. Before long he was writing songs and putting together a band. "Me, Fred, Zeb, and Tennessee started out playing hillbilly tunes," says Ted. "The guys woulda been happy to keep it like that, but I wanted to make sounds no bear's ever made before."

Ted admits he may have driven the guys a little hard at times and pushed them in directions they didn't care to go, especially during the big hair look of the eighties. "But hey, nobody's perfect," he says. That lack of perfection was painfully evident on his solo album *Countrisco*, an unfortunate mix of country and disco.

These days Ted is much more relaxed. Now that the band is back together, he describes himself as a regular fun-loving bear. When he's not touring, he enjoys hanging out with the guys, fly-fishing, and walking along the beach. Is there a special lady friend? "It's hard to meet someone on the road, but I'm always lookin'." Hear that, gals?

fred bedderhead

Instruments: Harmonica, bass guitar, and corn jug

Place of birth: Same den as Ted

Height: 6 feet 6 inches

Weight: 750 pounds

Fur: Brown, with a light brown snout

Favorite food: Red-hot chili peppers

Favorite band: The Red Hot Chili Peppers

Favorite movie: *Animal House*

Favorite actor: Yogi Bear

Growing up with musical genius Ted Bedderhead wasn't easy for Fred. "Ted's way smarter than your average bear," says Fred. "Way smarter. It forced me to establish my own identity from an early age."

Since he didn't have the big brains in the family, Fred managed to be big in another way, weighing as much as 750 pounds. Fred makes no apologies for his larger-than-life appetite. "I like to eat," he says. "Even when I was a li'l bear, I could always put away four salmon to Ted's one." His most embarrassing moment? "Getting thrown out of Live Aid for eating all the nachos backstage," Fred admits. "Farm Aid was way better—lots more biscuits and sausage gravy."

Ted helped his brother out on the musical front. "I started out lovin' the kazoo," Fred says. "But once Ted started wailin' on his guitar, he got me to pick up the bass." Soon the brothers Bedderhead had a unique sound that would influence the rock world for years.

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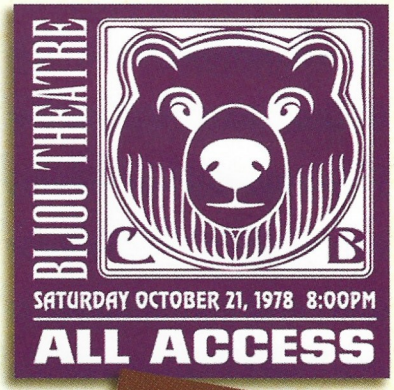
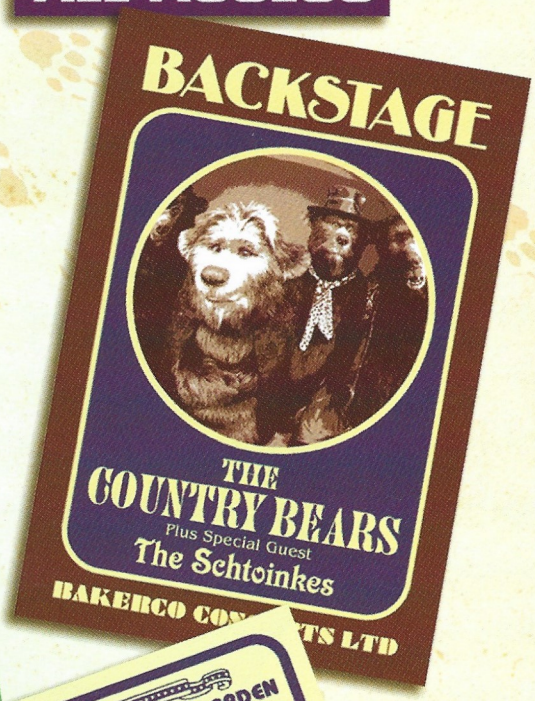
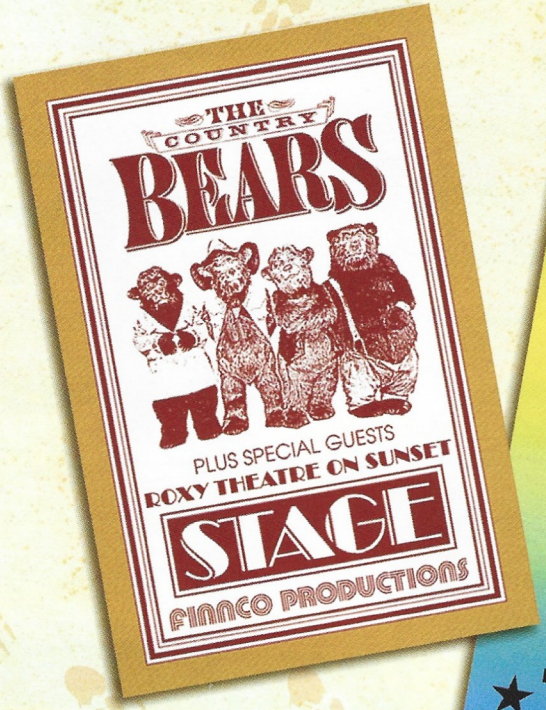
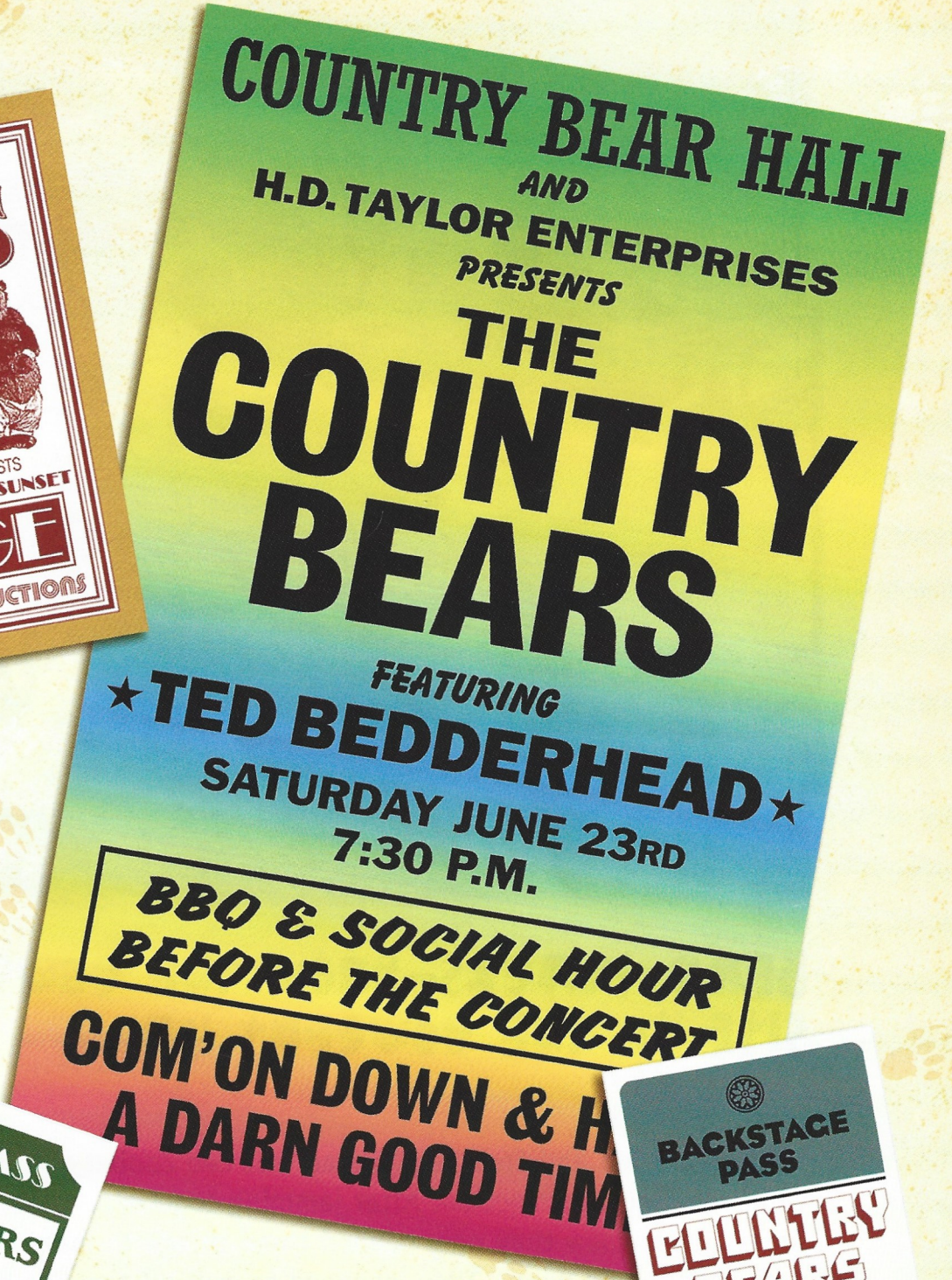








The Country Bears played the hottest gigs at the coolest clubs.

BEAR TRACKS—FROM THE CONSTRUCTION SITE TO THE CONCERT HALL

Brothers Ted and Fred Bedderhead met Zeb Zoober and Tennessee O'Neal while working construction. After jamming together at the site during lunch breaks, they knew they only needed three things to make it big: discipline, a hit single, and pants. They managed to pull off two out of three.

"I'll always be proud of being part of the band's history," says their longtime manager and curator of Country Bear Hall, Henry Dixon Taylor. It was Henry who encouraged the boys to put down their hammers and form a band.

Ironically, they got their first big break at a talent show held in the same concert hall they helped build with their very own paws. They beat out armpit farter extraordinaire Benny Bogswaggle and walked away with a recording contract.

Before agreeing on The Country Bears, the guys considered these other band names:

The Furry Four

Bear

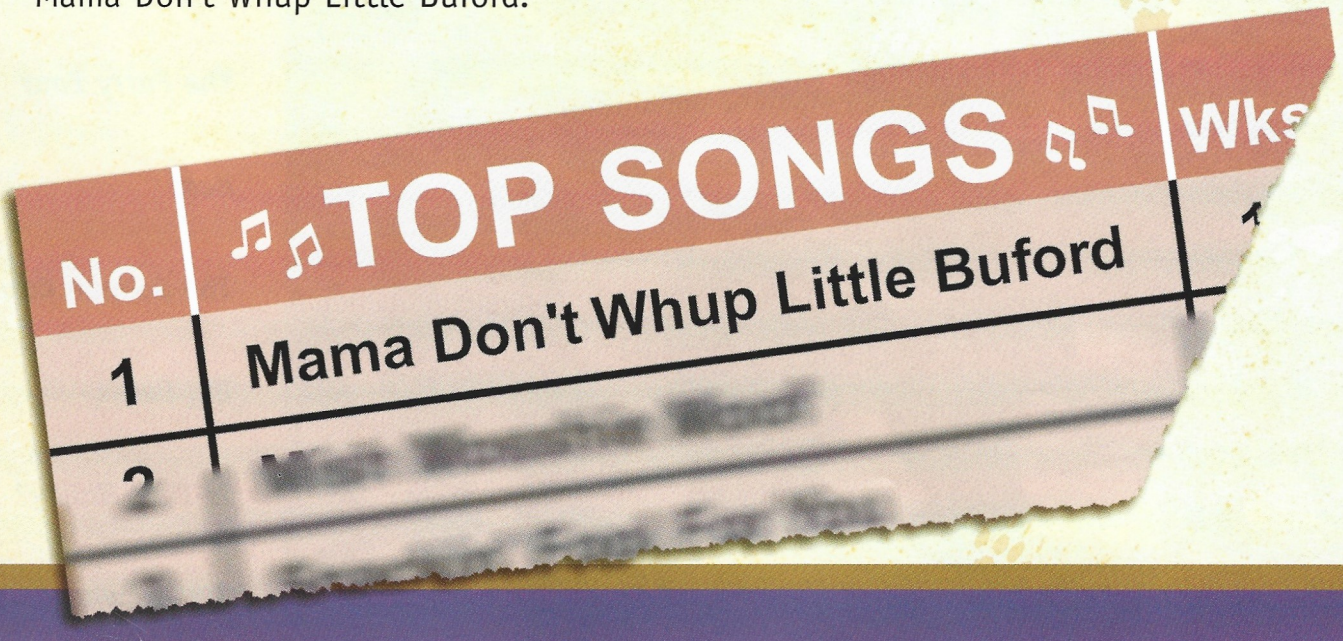
The Salmon Catchers

Big Bears

Is That Honey?

Big Brown Bears

The Country Bears' first album, *The Album What That's Our First*, produced the number one song "Mama Don't Whup Little Buford."



In a recent documentary, Eric Clapton said, "The first time I heard 'Mama Don't Whup Little Buford,' it totally changed my direction. And I'd never heard anybody play a one-string thang like that! I'd never even heard of a one-string thang."

Their next album had more of a rock flavor. Originally untitled, it came to be known as the *Brown Furry Album* due to its brown furry cover. Ringo Starr was quoted as saying, "Frankly, *Sergeant Pepper* was all about trying to top *Brown Furry*." The songs were great, but the cover smelled bad if it got wet.

As with so many rock bands of their day, The Country Bears' highs were high, and their lows . . . well, no one likes to talk about how low it really got. "It was like pullin' a string out of a sweater," says Fred. "Once things started comin' undone, they didn't stop. It was just a mess."

Word of Zeb's honey problem surfaced in the press. And a blowup backstage during a taping of *American Bandstand* led to a brief breakup.

During that time, Ted tried his paw at some solo projects. The Ted Experience produced one album with a song so long it had to be released on an eighteen-inch record.

A reunion show at Live Aid brought The Country Bears back together. Once again they boarded their trusty bus and set out on a tour. Roadie and his constant companion, Mr. Chicken, drove the band from town to town, spreading the Bears' music and vibes around the country. But it wouldn't last.

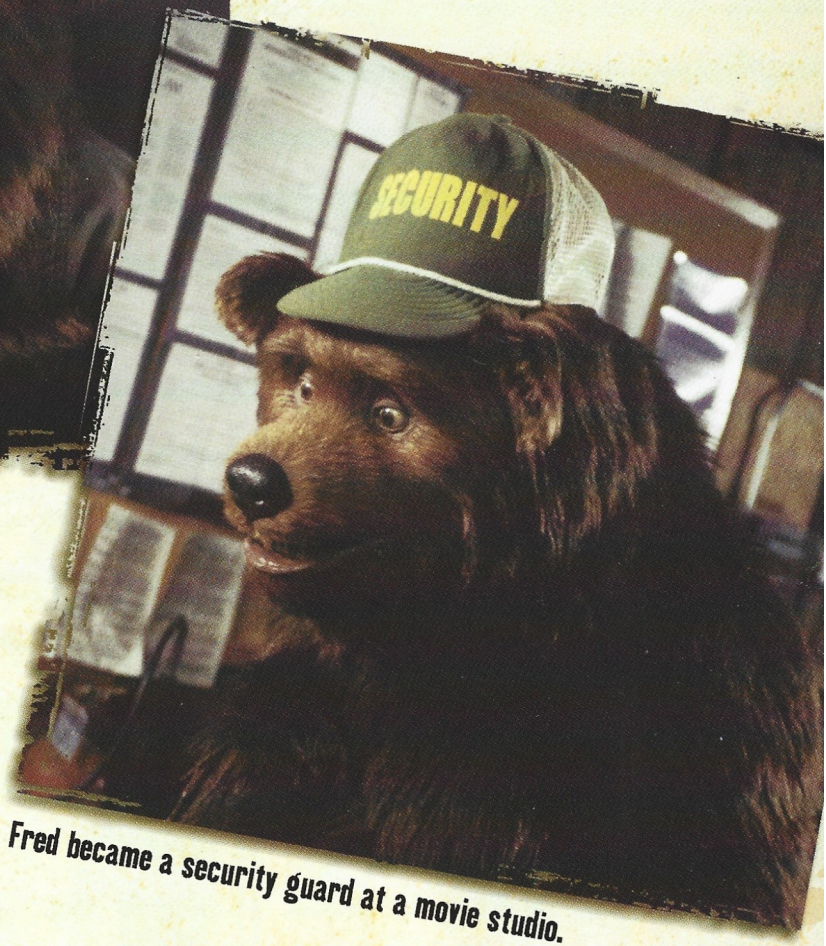
Fowl play? Not with Roadie and Mr. Chicken around!

The Country Bears officially broke up after playing Lollapalooza in 1991. It was the end of an era. "After Lollapalooza it was pretty much every bear for himself," Fred says. "We all went our separate ways."

Tennessee became a marriage counselor.

Ted continued his musical career (as a wedding singer).

Zeb hung out in bars and hit the honey full time.



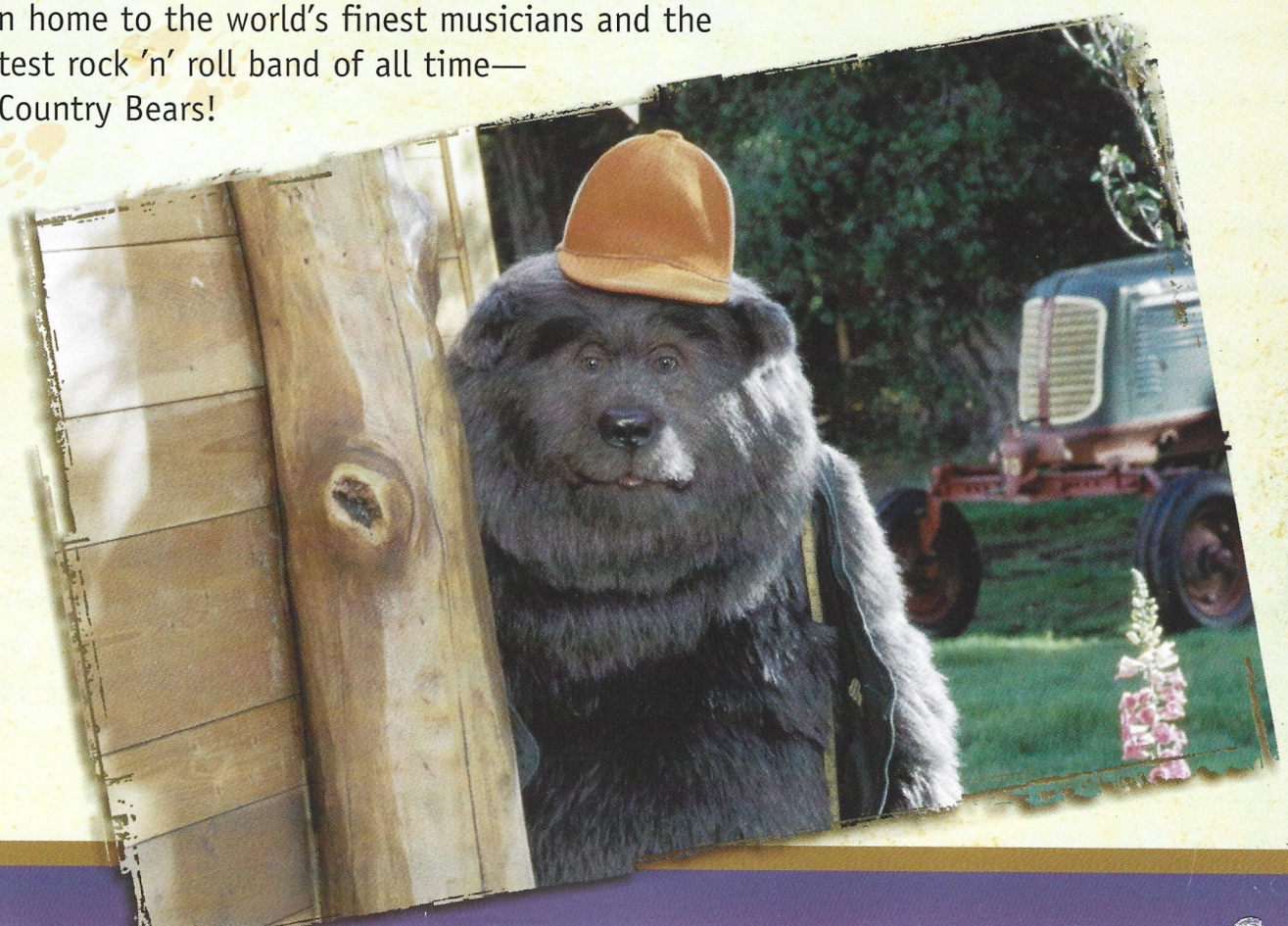
Fred became a security guard at a movie studio.

It all could have ended right there. "We were four lost bears with no pockets for a compass," recalls a teary-eyed Tennessee. "If it wasn't for Beary Barrington, we would have been just another pathetic group of has-bears."

"It's true," notes Zeb Zoober, often called the band's philosopher. "Beary got us together to save Country Bear Hall. I mean, what good's a Country Bear Hall without The Country Bears, man? I mean, there'da been no hall, no Bears . . ."

COUNTRY BEAR HALL

Today the lights are back on in Country Bear Hall. "And the grass is green," adds Big Al, the hall's caretaker. Reed Thimple, the greedy banker, wasn't able to destroy the hall as he had hoped. Country Bear Hall is once again home to the world's finest musicians and the greatest rock 'n' roll band of all time—The Country Bears!



BEARY BARRINGTON—THE COUNTRY BEARS' NUMBER ONE FAN

It took a cub with an extraordinary story to reunite an extraordinary band. "I was searching for my own roots," says ten-year-old Beary, who, thanks to his brother, Dex, had recently discovered that he wasn't like the rest of his family. He ran off to Country Bear Hall, recalling that Fred Bedderhead had once said in an interview, "At Country Bear Hall you could be different and still fit in."

When Henry Dixon Taylor told Beary that Country Bear Hall was going to be destroyed, Beary knew that saving the hall was his higher purpose. And maybe, just maybe, he could save The Country Bears at the same time!

My Hero
by Beary Barrington, 4th grade

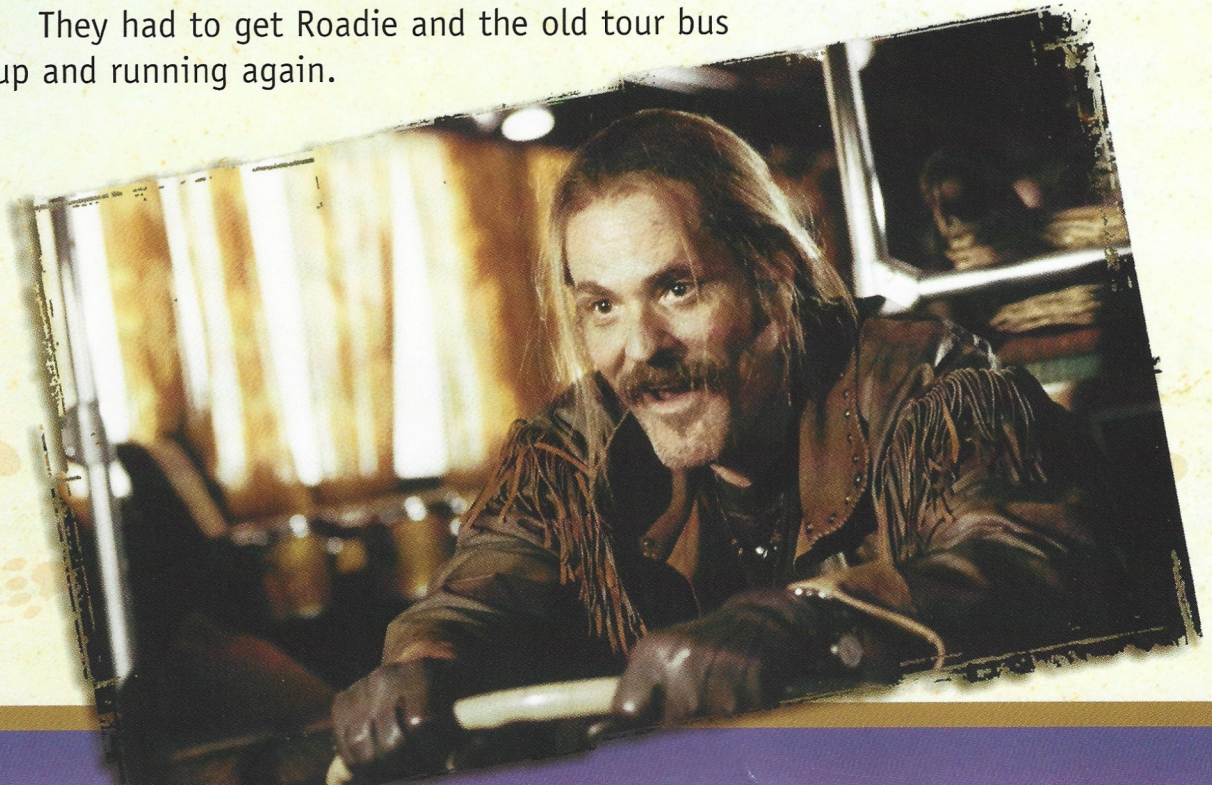
My hero is really heroes. And my heroes are The Country Bears. I can't really say Zeb is my hero, or Fred, or Ted, or even Tennessee, but as The Country Bears, what they do together makes them my heroes. The Country Bears are the best band in the whole wide world because their music makes me happy.

THE ROCKY ROAD TO A ROCK 'N' ROLL REUNION

Beary and Henry had only four days to raise twenty thousand dollars and save Country Bear Hall from Reed Thimple's wrecking ball. It was Beary's idea to get The Country Bears back together for a benefit concert. He reminded Henry of what Zeb Zoober had once said in an *Us* magazine interview: "Next to my camper-cab pickup, Country Bear Hall is my home. We'd do anything for that ol' place."

But could Beary and Henry get the band together on such short notice? There was a lot to do!

They had to get Roadie and the old tour bus up and running again.



They had to convince the Bears to give up their new careers (luckily those jobs weren't too glamorous!).

And they had to stay one step ahead of Officers Hamm and Cheets, the cops trying to bring Beary home.

But the biggest obstacle the band had to face was their own stubbornness. Could Fred, Ted, Zeb, and Tennessee forget the problems of the past and perform together again? It didn't seem likely. Things got so bad that Beary walked out and headed home.

Watching their number one fan walk away got the Bears back on track. They went directly to Beary's house, where Ted announced that the band would do the reunion show only if Beary was onstage with them—as the fifth Country Bear. But while Ted was inside talking to Beary, and Roadie was taking Mr. Chicken for a walk, Reed Thimple stole the bus. He kidnapped Zeb, Fred, and Tennessee!

After trying unsuccessfully to cram everyone into the Barringtons' minivan, Beary's dad hitched a boat to the back just for Ted. And they sped off to rescue their friends.

Reed locked the bears in a cage and explained why he needed to destroy Country Bear Hall. Thirty years before, he had been humiliated on that stage. Thirty years before, he had lost a talent show to The Country Bears. That's right—Reed Thimple was Benny Bogswaggle, the armpit farter!

To make a long story more bearable, the Bears made it to Country Bear Hall, where tons of fans were anxiously waiting for them to perform. Henry paid off Reed with the money earned from ticket sales, and the concert hall was saved!

Then The Country Bears hit the stage. The reunion concert of the century began!

The rest, as they say, is rock 'n' roll history!

JUST THE FACTS, MAN

When a band generates as much buzz as The Country Bears, there's bound to be false information leaked to the press. The following information is true. Honest.

Fred's other suspender has been a fan belt on the tour bus since 1974.

Fred and Marie Osmond once dated. Her parents didn't approve.

Ted once hit Dick Clark on the chin with a salmon. It was an accident.

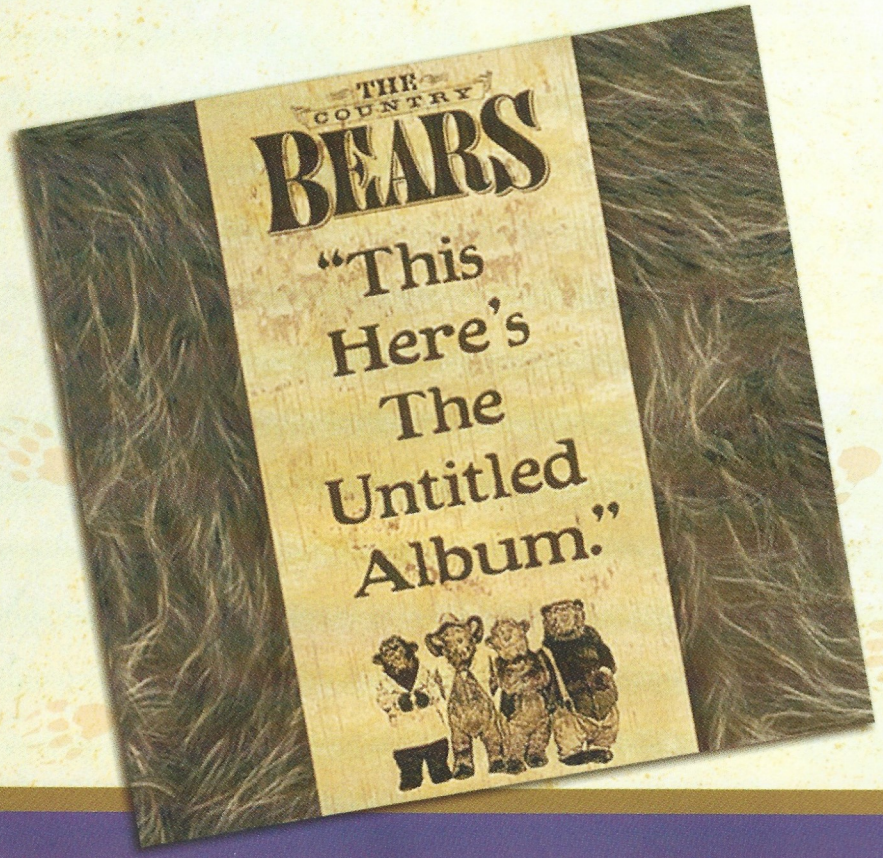
In addition to performing at weddings, Ted also sang at children's birthday parties.

Beary Barrington is The Country Bears' biggest fan, but Andre the Giant was the largest.

The Country Bears wrote the only country song ever to be recorded in Polish.

The Bears did not provide the voices for *The Country Bears* animated TV show.

Mr. Chicken is really a girl.



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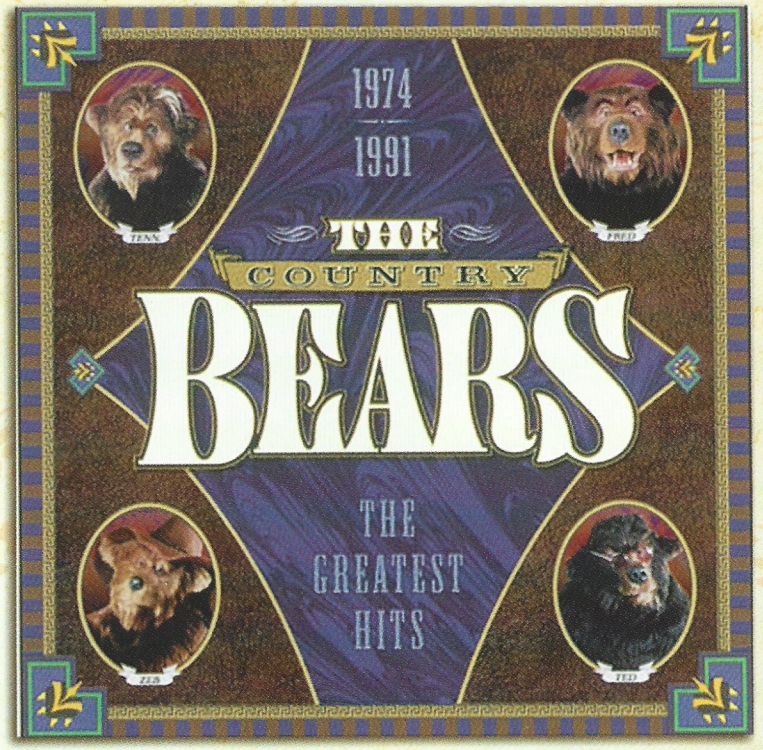
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THE COUNTRY BEARS
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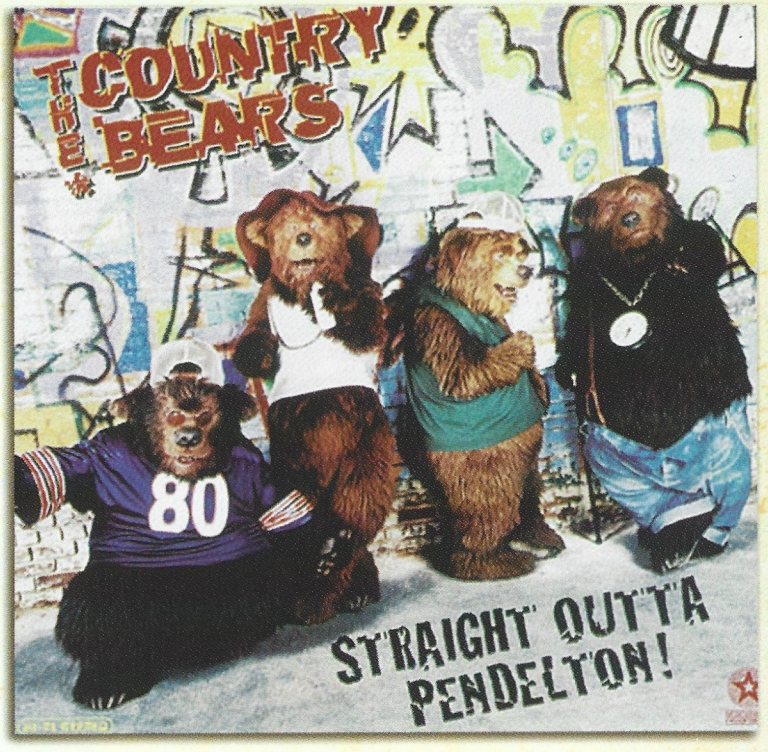
THE COUNTRY BEARS
80
STRAIGHT OUTTA PENDELTON!

A BIG BEAR HUG

The Country Bears are extremely grateful to all their fans. They know they wouldn't be here without you.

The band also wishes to thank Henry Dixon Taylor "fer still bein' our manager and friend," Big Al "fer keepin' up the grass at Country Bear Hall," and their number one fan, Beary Barrington. "Keep on truckin', little guy! And we'll keep tryin' to make music that makes y'all happy!"

Disney's

The Country Bears

The Bears are back in town!
Meet Ted and Fred Bedderhead, Zeb Zoober, and Tennessee O'Neal—
four furry guys who influenced the rock 'n' roll world as The Country Bears.
Now, for the first time, find out how Tennessee perfected playing the one-string
thang, how Zeb kicked his honey habit, and how a ten-year-old cub
got the Bears to reunite for the benefit concert of the century!
Jam-packed with facts and photos of the band,
The Country Bears: The Official Fan Book
is for anyone who can't *bear*
to be out of the loop!

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